



Washington State Department of Agriculture *Hearing Notice*

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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Effective date of raspberry standards delayed. Hearing on small business impact Jan. 18

OLYMPIA – A hearing on the Small Business Impact Statement that analyzed the cost of compliance with new red raspberry grades and standards will be held at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 18 in the County Council Chambers, Whatcom County Courthouse, 311 Grand Ave., Bellingham. In related action, Jim Jesernig, director of the state Department of Agriculture, this week exempted red raspberries harvested prior to June 1, 2001 from the grades and standards.

The purpose of the impact statement is to analyze the costs of compliance with the rule, and to determine if it imposes a disproportionate impact on small businesses. A legislative rules review committee determined that an earlier impact study was insufficient in pursuing methods to reduce costs on small businesses. In response, Department of Agriculture is seeking responses to three questions:

1. Does the impact statement adequately capture the economic impacts of the rules on businesses?
2. What, if any, legal and feasible methods can Department of Agriculture undertake to reduce economic impacts and still meet the objectives of the statutes upon which the rules are based?
3. Do the rules place a disproportionate economic impact on smaller businesses?

The red raspberry grades and standards were to go into effect June 22, 2000. Subsequent to the effective date of the rule, Department of Agriculture received a petition for stay and reconsideration due to the impacts of the rule on the 2000 harvest. An emergency rule moved the effective date to June 1, 2001. The emergency expires February 9. Adoption by Jesernig permanently moves the effective date to June 2001.

The red raspberry rules were established at the request of the Red Raspberry Commission. They establish grades and standards for fresh red raspberries used for freezing, puree, juice stock and other uses. The rules also establish container-marking requirements and specify how red raspberries may be used or sold.

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